

MT.KINABALU

SUMMIT OF BORNEO

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SABAH
Malaysia



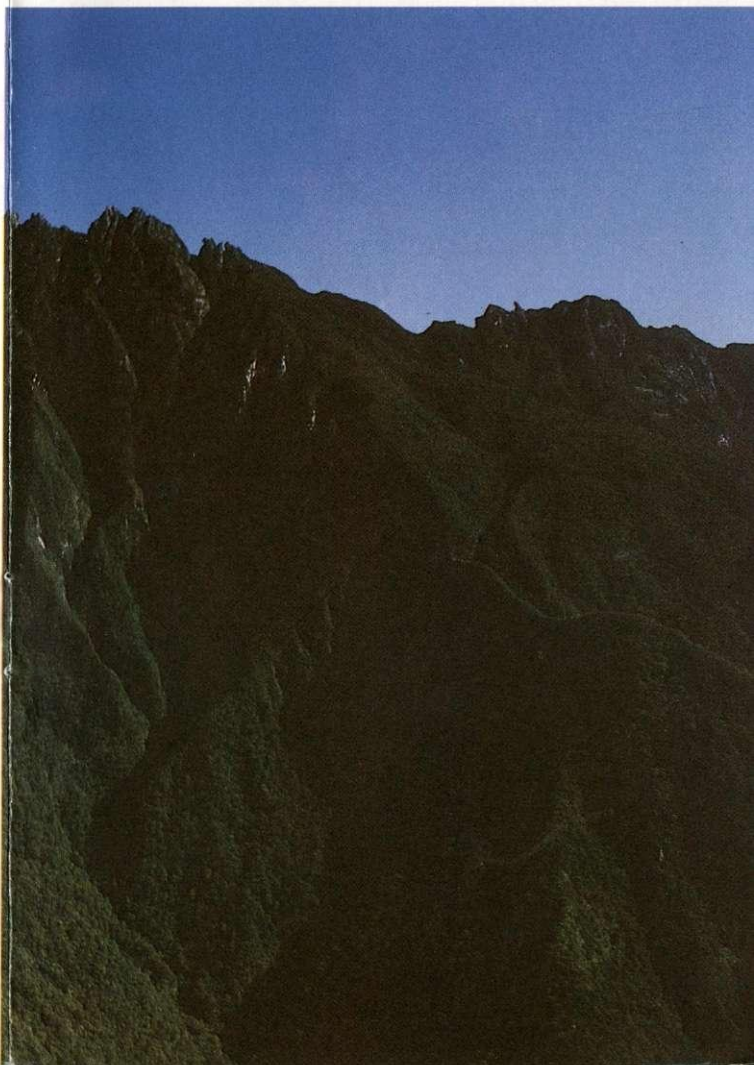
THE KINABALU PARK

Covering 754 square kilometers, The Kinabalu Park is one of the greatest attractions of Sabah. Within its boundaries are found the lowland rain-forest of the tropical zone as its lower level, the montane oaks and fig trees, the rhododendron shrubs and wild berries of the temperate zone at its medium level, and the conifers and other alpine-like associations of the summit zone at its upper level. Where else in the world can you find a complete ecological system such as this, compacted in one small area? It is therefore no wonder that a good number of its visitors are nature lovers eager to study, record and enjoy its richly varied natural resources.

Mt. Kinabalu 13,455 feet (4,101 meters)



The Park also has this 'away-from-it-all' cool serenity that offers a break from daily routine. Mt. Kinabalu, the summit of Borneo stands in ever-changing grandeur. Looming huge and dark in the light of dawn, it gradually appears in its full splendour revealing its numerous rugged peaks and waterfalls, only to be quickly hidden again behind a cloudy shroud billowing upward from the lowland forest. Some evenings one can get lucky when the mountain remains in full view awashed in warm sunset hues.



HOW TO GET THERE

From Kota Kinabalu, the capital of the Malaysian State of Sabah, you take an 83-kilometer car or bus ride to the Kinabalu Park. For most of the journey you will feel the vehicle labouring along because it is gradually climbing upwards along the ridge of the Crocker Range finally reaching the Park Headquarters at 1,558 meters above sea level.

The bus leaves Kota Kinabalu at 7.30 a.m. every morning and arrives at the entrance of the Park headquarters about two hours later. The return trip to Kota Kinabalu is at 8.00 a.m. Four-wheel drive vehicles and coaches, small aircraft and helicopters, are also available for charter.



Necklace orchid (*Coelogyne hirtella*)

WHERE TO STAY

A word of caution: the Park's accommodation facilities are usually fully booked months in advance, especially in April, July, August and December. However, privately operated room and board facilities are available within easy distance of the Park. For the Park's facilities, you make reservations for overnight stay and full payment through the Reservation Clerk at the Park's Head Office at Kota Kinabalu. All rates are quoted in Ringgit Malaysia and are subject to revision without notice. In the mountainous region the weather can change without warning from bright sunshine to mist and cloud to torrential downpour. The nights are cold and temperatures can drop down to below freezing. Bring enough warm clothing with you and pack them in plastic bags to keep them dry.



Mt. Kinabalu Park Headquarters



Laban Rata Resthouse (3,353 meters)

PORING HOT SPRINGS

Located 39 kilometers northward is the Park's station at Poring Hot Springs. Chartering is virtually the only way to get there. You can soak yourself in the skin-curative properties of a hot sulphur bath, take the various trails leading through rich lowland forest, mountain streams and waterfalls towards the bat caves. Do some bird watching along the way through your binoculars. There is also a playing field and volleyball court if you are game-inclined.

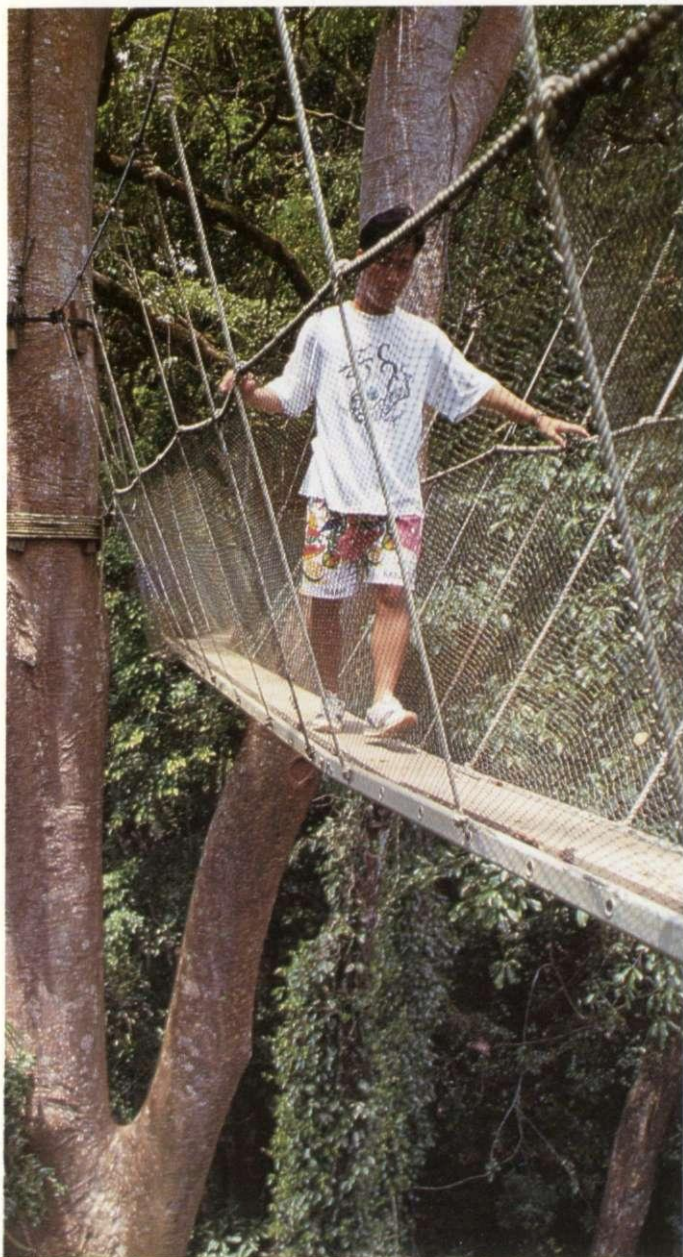
At the Poring Hot Springs, if you are lucky you may see a *Rafflesia*, the world's largest flower, in bloom. You can also visit the Orchid garden that contains a wide selection of the local species, some of which are endemic to the area and very rare. Butterflies and moths are also seen around the area. Make your way gingerly along the swaying tree top canopy walkway. You will be rewarded with new insights of the tropical forest and eye-to-eye view of its tree top denizens. Look down, and you will probably see an iridescent cloud, a host of butterflies hovering below you, their fluttering burnished many-coloured wings reflecting the sunlight filtering through the verdant forest leaves.



Poring Hot Springs rock pool

FOR OVERNIGHT VISITORS

There are two cabins and a youth hostel available at Poring Hot Springs, and a camping ground for those who wish to rough it out. Bring your own food.



Canopy walkway

MOUNT KINABALU

Only one million and a half years ago, a mass of granitic rock that had been cooling and hardening under the surface for several million years began to rise and break through the overlying crusts of softer rocks. Erosion by heavy rains and, later, by ice and glaciers shaped the new mountain. Even today the striations, "glacial polish" and the sculptured and streamlined forms and the summit peaks give witness to the effects of this glaciation. Millions of tons of rock debris were washed into lowland approaches of the mountain. The Park Headquarters itself sits on a ridge of accumulated muds, clay and rock washed off the eroding heights 34,000 years ago. With the return of a warm climate and the melting of the glaciers, Kinabalu attained its modern form and appearance.

At its present height of 4,101 meters (13,455 feet) Mount Kinabalu is still rising at approximately 5mm per year. The landslides on its slopes and rock debris beneath its peaks are evidence of its still-continuing movement. Nature's powerful forces have produced a scenic location of remarkable beauty. The gradual evolutionary process has also resulted in fauna and flora, some of which are found nowhere else in the world.

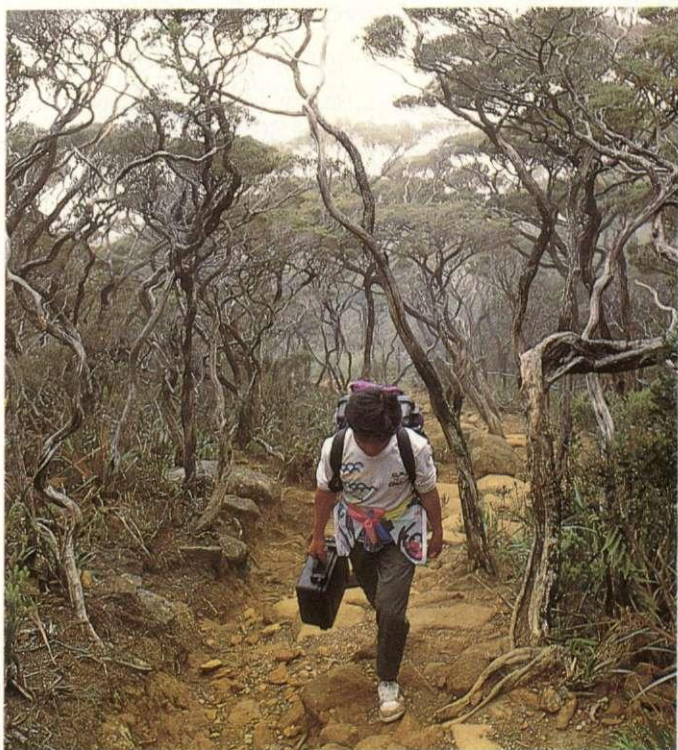
ITS PEOPLE

The slopes of Kinabalu are the home of the hill tribes of Dusuns or Kadazans who believe the mountain to be the resting place of the spirits of their departed and therefore remains sacred to them. Their *Kampung* or villages are scattered throughout the area and they traditionally plant rice and other crops on the steep slopes on a shifting cultivation basis. They scamper up and down the mountain with the greatest of ease, often with heavy loads on their back. They are the registered mountain guides you are required to hire for the climb.

CLIMBING UP MOUNT KINABALU

Book your accommodation through the Park's Head Office in Kota Kinabalu. Your mountain guide, porters and transport to the power station where the climb begins will be finalized at the Registration Office at the Park Headquarters. Make sure you have suitable walking shoes and warm clothing, gloves and a hat. Bring a rain coat, a water bottle and some high-energy food like chocolate, nuts, raisins, and glucose sweets. You will need a good torch-light. Headache tablets, paper tissues, and plaster for cuts and blisters are useful.

You start off on the summit trail at the Power Station at 1,829 meters altitude with your guide and trek along the crest of a narrow ridge that dips down to the main slopes of the mountain itself. You then come to Carson's Falls, a waterfall where you can fill your water bottle.



Lowland trail

The trail then starts to climb, and you go up a series of steps formed out of tree roots and reach the ridge, at 1,951 meters and the First Trail Shelter where you can take a rest and look back down the road that links the Park to Kota Kinabalu. You have now left the montane oak forest and arrive at the mossy or Cloud Forest Zone where the tree trunks are gnarled and twisted and their branches are loaded with mosses, ferns and orchids. You will also see the Copper-leafed Rhododendron with its orange blossoms as these are quite abundant here.

At 2,134 meters you pass the Second Trail Shelter, climb a steep narrow ridge and come out above the tree canopy. The ridge broadens and dips back into mossy forest and the home of Low's pitcher plant. You pass the Kamborongoh Telecoms Station at 2,225 meters to reach the Third Trail Shelter. The trail then divides. On the left are steep steps leading to the Layang Layang Radio and Television Stations.

You take the right-hand trail through a bamboo forest and tree-ferns and arrive at Carson's Camp, the fourth shelter at 2,651 meters. Take a rest here among the wild raspberries and the peachy-yellow blooms of the Low's Rhododendron and enjoy your packed lunch.

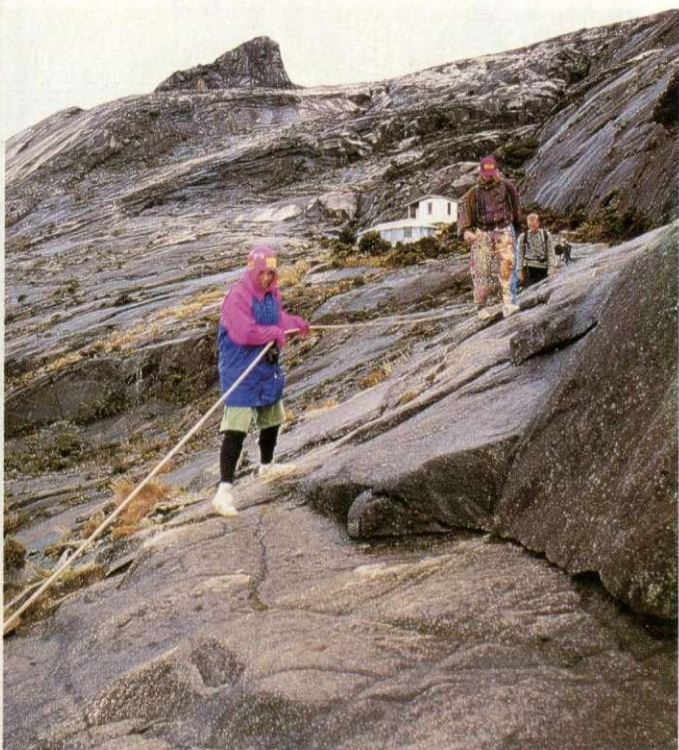
From Carson's Camp you climb steeply over a patch of ultra basic rocky outcrop and orange-coloured soil where the plant life changes abruptly to the Southern Pine, Mossy Pitcher Plant, and the Tea-Tree, known locally as *Sayat-Sayat*.

Just before the Fifth Trail Shelter at 2,896 meters you come to the first rock outcroppings where you may see, through a break in the cloud, the jagged peaks of the mountain towering above you. You continue past Paka Cave to follow a gully where orchids and rhododendrons abound.

As you approach the Sixth Trail Shelter at 3,190 meters you may detour to the helipad where you can take a short break. From here, on a clear day, you can get a really magnificent view of the mountain peak above you.

You reach the tree line at 3,353 meters, and the Laban Rata Resthouse that boasts of electricity, hot water, room heaters, a canteen, and where you may stay the night. After an early morning breakfast you start off towards the mountain peak, climbing over bare rockface past the *Sayat-Sayat* Hut and finally to the roof of South East Asia, on Low's Peak where you thrill to a magnificent sunrise and a panoramic view of about the whole State of Sabah.

You make the descent along the same trail before the clouds envelope the mountain, hurrying back to the comfort of your Park cabin before noon, or in a leisurely manner, taking time out to study more closely the nature phenomenon of the Park. Some visitors spend weeks climbing up and down the mountain and bring back with them magnificent photographs, slides and video shots of its beautiful and interesting flora and fauna, capturing and recording its ever-changing moods, and the aspects and views above the clouds.



Rock face trail

HOW TO GET TO SABAH



International Airlinks to Kota Kinabalu



**TOURISM
MALAYSIA**

For More Information

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